



Women Changing America

The 21st Annual Write Women Back Into History Essay Contest

To give students a deeper and more relevant appreciation of women's roles in history and celebrate March as Women's History Month, the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, Iowa Department of Education, and the State Historical Society of Iowa invite teachers to sponsor the *Write Women Back Into History* Essay Contest in their classrooms.

2005 Theme: Women Changing America This year's theme honors and recognizes the role of American women in transforming culture, history and politics as leaders, writers, scientists, educators, politicians, artists, historians, and informed citizens. Students are encouraged to choose a woman, preferably from Iowa, from any historical period including the present and write about the accomplishments of her life and how she has made a difference to the student and to society. **A student's own thoughts on the significance of the woman's contributions are important.** Essays should identify 1) why the woman should be written into history (i.e., what meaningful contributions has she made to her community, the state, nation, or world?), and 2) why she is important to the student. Students should consider what people would learn about us from this essay 50 years from now. A successful essay will discuss why the student researched, read about or interviewed, and found the subject to be a role model; not merely be a biographical sketch.

Eligibility: The contest is open to any sixth through ninth grade student, female or male, in an Iowa school. Students in public, private, and home school are eligible. A sponsoring teacher must send in essays. However, only **one** finalist may be submitted from **each classroom**. A teacher with five different classrooms may submit five different essays. **Each student** may submit only **one** essay.

Entry Format: All entries must be typed on 8 1/2" x 11" white paper. Maximum length is **600 words** not including source list. Source list must be included. Submit **three copies of each essay** with a completed **entry form** attached to the back side of each copy of the essay. Essays become property of the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women and will not be returned.

Criteria for Judging: Entries should be checked for accuracy and use of standard English procedures: correct punctuation, spelling, grammar. Essays should be proofread for errors, not only with spellcheck. Essays should make use of evidence and include specific examples as to why the woman should be written into history and how she is important to others and the student. Essays should exhibit effective use of descriptive language, voice and originality. Citing of all sources, whether primary or secondary, is mandatory. Essays must adhere to all entry format rules.

Judging: Winning essays will be chosen by a panel composed of at least a dozen Iowa authors, historians, activists, and representatives of the sponsoring agencies.

Deadline: Essays must be **postmarked** no later than **Friday, January 28, 2005**. Deliver or mail entries to Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, Department of Human Rights, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319.

For more information: Lori M. SchraderBachar, telephone, 515/281-4470 or 800/558-4427; or e-mail, lori.schraderbachar@iowa.gov.

Prizes: Prizes will be awarded to the first, second, and third place winner in each of the 6-7th Grade and 8-9th Grade divisions. Prizes will include Women's History Month books, and other memorabilia. Winners will be honored in a ceremony at the State Capitol in March 2005. Teachers who sponsor the winning students' essays will receive classroom resources, such as posters and books, and will be invited to attend the awards ceremony. Winners, their hometown media, and *The Des Moines Register*, will be notified prior to the ceremony (March 2005). All winners and finalists will receive a certificate of participation signed the Governor.

Special Awards: A special award offered by the State Historical Society of Iowa, the **Howard Draper Brayton and Jessie Sellman Brayton Award**, will be presented to the **first place** winner in each of the two grade categories. The winning students will receive a \$25 cash prize.

Best Essays on Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math: Women have always made significant contributions to the fields of science, technology, engineering and math, but historically those contributions have not been valued as highly as those of men. The Program for Women in Science and Engineering at Iowa State University and the Women in Science and Engineering Program at the University of Iowa will award prizes to the best essays that focus on a woman in science, technology, engineering and math. The first place winner in each grade division will receive a \$25 cash prize, and the second place winner in each will receive a book award. All other contest rules apply.

Edith Rose Murphy Sackett Award for the Best Essay on Volunteerism: Edith Rose Murphy Sackett was a volunteer leader for more than 57 years. The award, established by the Spencer branch of the American Association of University Women, will be presented as a certificate to a student whose entry best focuses on the life of a woman who dedicated much of her life to public service and volunteerism. All other contest rules apply.

OFFICIAL 2005 WWBH ESSAY CONTEST ENTRY FORM

(Attach a copy of this form to the back side of the original entry and each of the two copies.)

Student's Name _____ Grade _____ Word Count _____

Student's Home Address _____

Student's Phone # _____

Student's E-mail Address _____

School's Name _____

School's Address _____

School's Phone # _____ School's Fax # _____

Teacher's First and Last Name _____

Teacher's E-mail Address _____

Name of Woman Featured in Essay _____

Name/Address of Local Newspaper _____

State Senator (not U.S.) _____ State Representative (not U.S.) _____

Send three copies to: ICSW, Department of Human Rights, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319